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Best Practices

“Best Practices” are practices that are used in community corrections that aid in reducing the risk of liability and/or increase the opportunity for successful outcomes. Below you will find a list of “Best Practices.”

1. **Warrants** –Allow the judge to complete issue date upon his/her signature.
2. Consider adopting a formal, written waiver to be used when the probationer is given less than 72-hours notice of a revocation hearing.
3. **Case Documentation**– Note any discussion with probationers regarding the conditions of probation, including “stay-away” and “no-alcohol” orders. Generally, it is considered best practice to note each special condition, each month, for each probationer. If it is not documented then it didn’t happen.
4. **Standard Operating Procedures** – Consider developing formal procedures for case management and oversight. This helps ensure a consistent quality of service for each probationer, generally decreases liability and may help the program continue to operate through future changes in personnel.
5. **Financial payments** – Ensure procedures are in place so probationers may easily seek remedy for any debts owed to them when the case closes.
6. **Tolling procedures** – Utilize a single tolling method for any given case, so as to avoid confusion.
7. Adopt formal procedures for case management reviews.
8. Monitor caseload levels in consultation with the court and/or city.
9. Include the type of contact made with the offender (office visit, phone visit, etc.) for each case note entry.

10. Consider utilizing formal case file reviews to help eliminate case management or documentation errors.
11. Address ongoing special conditions of probation, such as “no alcohol” orders, with the probationer each month and note these discussions within each case note entry.
12. Do not “front-load” (collecting fees in advances) supervision fees. Collaborate with the courts to ensure all necessary financial adjustments are made when a case is closed early. Document all financial adjustments within the case management system.
13. In order to avoid confusion, ensure the days remaining on the back of the warrant match the days remaining on the tolling affidavit.
14. **Quarterly Data Analysis**– Review quarterly reports or other metrics to assess the overall health and performance of the program. Determine if the quarterly report numbers are accurate.
15. Ensure delinquent cases are resolved in a timely manner.

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